

Amendments to the Specification:

Page 6, line 4, insert the following new paragraph immediately after paragraph number 0015:

“Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view of the tubular steering mechanism further illustrating the bushing cutout shown in Figure 1.”

Page 7, line 10, replace paragraph 0020 as follows:

“The bushing 16 rotatably receives the pinion 12, and is used to properly position the pinion 12 with respect to the rack 14, as will be discussed in more detail below. The bushing 16 includes a body section 30 and a collar section 32 and is itself rotatably received within the pinion housing 18. Coupled via top bearings 34 and bottom bearings 36, the pinion ~~rotate~~ rotates with respect to the bushing 16. The pinion 12 is preferably supported at the body section 20 and at a nose section 37 of the pinion. The body section 20 30 and nose section 37 are located on opposite sides of the gear section 22. The top bearings 34, which are received by the collar section 32 of the bushing 16, support the shaft section 20 of the pinion 12. The shaft section 20 may include a shoulder 35 to prevent axial motion between the pinion and the top bearings 34. The bottom bearings 36, which are supported by the body section 30 of the bushing 16, contact the nose section 37 of the pinion 12.”

Page 9, line 11, insert the following new paragraph immediately after paragraph number 0023:

“In Figures 1 and 3, a cutout 80 is shown formed in the wall of the bushing 16 in order to provide the necessary clearance between the bushing 16 and the rack casing 28 when the bushing is rotated to adjust and reposition the pinion 12. The cutout 80 has upper edges 81 and lower edges 82 which are sufficiently spaced to provide the desired clearance.”

Amendments to the Drawings:

In Figure 1, add legends and lead lines for cutout 80 and upper edge 81 as shown in red on the amended Fig. 1 attached to this response.

Add new Figure 3 (informal) as attached to this response.